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***INSIDE:***

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## TOYOTA SAYS SOFTWARE GLITCH IN E.D.R.s CAN GIVE FAULTY SPEED READINGS

A top Toyota executive says the crash data boxes in its vehicles are reliable but a bug in the software that reads the information can provide inaccurate vehicle speeds.

The disclosure comes as the National Highway Transportation Safety Admin. continues its investigation into unintended acceleration of Toyota models.

"Toyota has acknowledged previously that the event data recorders are not accurate," said Takeshi Uchiyamada, executive vice president in charge of research and development. "We have been able to determine that there is no defect in the event data recorders."

But, "we have found that there was a software bug in the event data recorder readers that download data. The bug had to do with data that indicated speed," he said. The issue was discovered this past spring and has since been corrected.

The event data recorder, known as an EDR, also records such information as throttle position and braking pressure.

In August, Toyota Motor Corp. said it had reviewed 3,000 complaints of unintended acceleration since March and said the results backed its long-held stance: There have been no electronic glitches that cause vehicles to surge out of control.

Toyota has said other possible explanations for the complaints include driver error and foreign objects trapping the accelerator. Additionally, some drivers still are using the wrong floor mats, months after the automaker warned customers to take them out.

In August, NHTSA said brakes were not applied by drivers of Toyota vehicles in at least 35 of 58 crashes blamed on unintended acceleration. The government agency also said there was no evidence of electronics-related causes for the accidents in reviewing the electronic data recorders.

During an interview session with reporters in Detroit, Uchiyamada referred to a 2007 crash involving a Tundra pickup that hit a tree. The data indicated the truck was traveling more than 170 miles per hour.

He said critics were saying the speed was not feasible so they concluded the "EDR cannot be trusted."

"We wanted to clarify today that is not the case. The event data recorder was always accurate, and the only reading that was inaccurate was speed," he said.

Uchiyamada said many of the vehicles investigated early for sudden acceleration were reinvestigated, and that "in the rechecks there has been no evidence of sudden surges."

Since November, Toyota has recalled more than 13 million vehicles worldwide, including more than 10 million in the United States, most of them to address unintended acceleration. - *Automotive News*

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# INDEX





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